

Taking Control of Recreational Activities

We can prevent athletic injuries by providing better training and insisting that participants wear the proper PPE. Most athletic injuries result from people being out of condition or not warming up before an event. Practically all sports involve some type of hazard since they center on the principles of attack and retreat. But, if you take the proper safety-control measures, you can reduce most of the injury-causing hazards.

Administrative Controls

To ensure safe recreational activities for personnel, commands should provide protective control in the form of rules and procedures. They also should provide qualified physical-training instructors, special-services officers, and recreational leaders. Commands should select recreational personnel based on their experience. However, they also should consider their familiarity with, interest in, and ability to instruct or supervise activities.

Good leadership promotes safety at recreational activities. You must consider the physical differences of the participants. As a leader, you also must understand the goal of the sport involved and demand complete observance of the rules.

If you are a recreational leader, give preliminary instructions to all players and thoroughly indoctrinate beginners in the basics of the sport. You can do that through a progressive training program. To avoid mishaps caused by confusion, make sure all players clearly understand your instructions.

As a recreational supervisor or coach, make sure all injured persons receive immediate medical attention. Make sure participants do not drink alcoholic beverages before or during play.

Before allowing players to engage in any vigorous sport, put them through a warm-up period. Without preliminary warm-ups, your players are more likely to be injured.

Qualified officials must manage all sports contests, whether intramural or extramural. They must make sure the participants carefully follow the standard rules of the game.

Personal Responsibility

As a participant in an athletic event, you have several responsibilities. One is to protect yourself from injury. You should not continue to participate, practice or play in events when you are excessively tired. Before play starts, warm up. Do not try a new game or practice a new athletic skill without direct supervision of a qualified monitor. Make sure your equipment fits properly and you know how to use it. Wear only clean clothing and equipment next to your skin. Do not take unnecessary chances. Pay strict attention to how to play the game. ❌

Resources:

- https://www.cnet.navy.mil/cnet/gmt/gmt03/1_1.pdf [*Recreational Safety*]
- <http://www.nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/injury/index.htm> [*Sports/Physical Activity Injury Prevention*]
- http://tpub.com/content/administration/14167/css/14167_167.htm [*Recreational Safety Controls*]
- http://www.uscg.mil/SAFETY/rec_safety.htm [*Recreational Safety*].

Navy photo by PHC Chris Desmond